

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 OMB-01

CIEP-03 IO-14 DRC-01 /154 W
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R 211801Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9906

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 5008

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT, ELAB, SHUM

SUBJECT: ITF BOYCOTT REACTION: CHILEAN DELEGATION PRESS
CONFERENCE

REF: SANTIAGO 4968

1. SUMMARY: DURING AUGUST 20 PRESS CONFERENCE, CHILEAN LABOR LEADERS JUST BACK FROM STOCKHOLM ITF CONGRESS CLAIMED TWO-DAY BOYCOTT WAS CHILEAN VICTORY OVER STERNER MEASURES DESIRED BY "MARXISTS." DELEGATES SOUGHT TO POSE AS BELEAGUED HEROES FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CONTINUING CAUTIOUSLY ATTEMPT TO INDUCE GOVERNMENT TO RELAX PRESENT RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE UNIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ALL EIGHT CHILEAN LABOR LEADERS WHO ATTENDED RECENT STOCKHOLM ITF CONGRESS HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AUG 20 AFTER FIRST CALLING ON MIN LABOR GEN. DIAZ. ACTING AS SPOKESMAN FOR GROUP, PORT WORKERS (COMACH) CHIEF EDUARDO RIOS CLAIMED TWO-DAY BOYCOTT REPRESENTED MAJOR "VICTORY" FOR CHILE IN THAT MARXIST FORCES, "LED BY EUROPEANS WITH SWEDES AT THEIR HEAD," WANTED IMMEDIATE AND TOTAL BOYCOTT. MARXISTS WERE SO COMMITTED TO CHILEAN
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BOYCOTT, RIOS ARGUED, "THAT THEY COULDN'T LEAVE ITF CONGRESS

WITH EMPTY HANDS," AND TWO-DAY BOYCOTT "WHICH IS AN INSIGNIFICANT MEASURE" WAS RESULT.

3. RIOS STRESSED POST-BOYCOTT ITF ACTION WILL DEPEND ON REPORT OF ITF INVESTIGATING TEAM, ALTHOUGH, HE ADDED, "I DOUBT IF THERE WILL BE PROBLEMS." RIOS THEN POINTEDLY CITED NUMEROUS GOVT STATEMENTS TO EFFECT THAT TRADE UNION ACHIEVEMENTS WILL BE RESPECTED. SAID RIOS, "WE BELIEVE IN THE WORD OF THE MILITARY LEADERS."

4. RETURNING TO ITF CONGRESS THEME, RIOS AND OSCAR FRIAS OF MARITIME WORKERS CLAIMED THAT CHILE'S "BEST ALLIES" IN STOCKHOLM WERE LABOR LEADERS FROM MEXICO, BRAZIL, U.S., HONDURAS, BOLIVIA, AND "SOME GROUPS" FROM ARGENTINA. EVEN THOUGH CHILEAN DELEGATES WERE NOT SEATED, RIOS CLAIMED THEY WERE ACTIVE IN CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS AND HAD ISSUED A DECLARATION STATING ANY BOYCOTT WOULD HURT CHILEAN WORKERS MOST. MENTIONING SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER PALME BY NAME, RIOS SAID POLITICAL PRESSURE AGAINST CHILE DURING CONGRESS WAS "TREMENDOUS." HE PRAISED FAIRNESS OF ITF SEC. GEN. BLYTHE, HOWEVER, NOTING THAT CHILEAN MARIXSTS WERE NOT SEATED AND OFFENSIVE ANTI-CHILEAN SLOGANS HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM MEETING HALL.

5. IN SEPARATE STATEMENT, MIN LABOR DIAZ EXPRESSED HIS "EXTRAORDINARY SATISFACTION" OVER ACTIVITIES OF CHILEAN DELEGATION. TWO-DAY BOYCOTT, HE CLAIMED, DEMONSTRATED "THE FAILURE OF MARXIST EFFORTS BEGUN IN GENEVA (ILO CONFERENCE) AND DESIGNED TO CULMINATE IN STOCKHOLM."

6. COMMENT: LITTLE QUALITATIVELY NEW IN PRESS CONFERENCE, WHICH FOLLOWS LINE OF PREVIOUS CHILEAN REACTION TO BOYCOTT (REFTEL). AS EXPECTED, RIOS AND COMPANY ARE PLAYING THE ROLE OF VALIANT DEFENDERS OF CHILEAN HONOR TO THE LOCAL AUDIENCE, WHILE AT SAME TIME CONTINUING CAUTIOUS ATTEMPT TO INDUCE GOVERNMENT TO RELAX PRESENT RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE UNIONS. POPPER

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